

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Welcome, and thanks for standing by. At this time all participants will be able to listen only until the question and answer session of the conference. At that time if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star 1. I would also like to remind participants that today's conference is being recorded. If anyone has any objections, you may disconnect at this time. And now we will turn the meeting over to Mr. Tim O'Connor, today's consulting official. Sir, you may begin.

Thank you very much. I'd like to welcome everybody and thank you for joining us today for today's consultation meeting. As you heard, my name is Tim O'Connor. I'm the Associate Administrator for Special Nutrition Programs at USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, and I am going to be the consulting official today. I'd like to welcome tribal leaders and members to today's session. We've got a full agenda today. We're going to spend time going over about eight sets of regulations that are all based on the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act from 2010. You may remember that that Act was signed into being by President Obama about a year-and-a-half ago, and we've been very busy taking that statute and putting it into place, and it's going to be making many, many changes in a lot of the child nutrition programs that we administer here.

We're also going to go through a few items that are news and update items for you that are especially interesting and pertinent to folks in Indian country. And then open it up to any kinds of questions and issues and other sorts of topics that you'd like to consult with us on.

I want to start, though, by mentioning just how important these consultation sessions are. We take very seriously at the Food and Nutrition Service the responsibility that we have working closely with our partners in Indian country. We have a lot of programs that reach into your communities, and we really need your input and want to make sure that we are consulting with you as we are administering those programs and making changes to them that are required by statute or in response to issues and stuff that you bring up.

Today's meeting is a conference call. And I welcome all of you on the phone to join us in the introductions and stuff. And as we go through we'll be pausing every now and again to get your input on the different things that we're presenting and stuff. As we go through the introductions we want to make sure that we capture your name and your tribe for our official consultation record. I know we have a lot of folks joining us on the phone, and I want to start by first inviting tribal leaders, elders and their designees to introduce themselves. And then we'll proceed with introductions from tribal members joining us today.

Again, welcome to today's consultation session, and I look forward to our discussion, and now I'm going to turn it over to our moderator, Barbara Lopez, to help us with the introductions. Barbara, you want to go ahead?

Thank you, Tim. And welcome everyone to today's session. We do want to make sure that you all received the materials for today's consultation meeting. That includes an agenda and several handouts. We did email the materials last week, early last week, and we also provided another email with all the handouts early this morning. You can also find all the materials, including the agenda, on our Food and Nutrition Service tribal web page, which is www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal. And you can find all the handouts for today's session posted there online.

As Tim mentioned, today's session will be part of the official consultation record, thus we want to ensure that we capture everyone's name and tribe for the record, so let's go ahead and start with introductions over the phone. We welcome everyone joining us today to participate in introductions. We do know that we have many folks joining us today, so we'd like to first start with tribal leaders, elders, and designees for the introduction piece. And I'll ask the operator to please help us with introductions. Please press star 1 on your phone, and that will allow you to connect with the operator and with us to join in introductions. Operator, if I could please get your assistance?

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Thank you. Once again, to begin the introductions, please press star 1. Please record your name when prompted slowly and clearly. And to withdraw your request is star two. Once again, for the introductions, if you could please press star 1 at this time. One minute please.

Attendees:

Yvonne Theodore Little River
Tony Nertoli, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Darren Webb, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Deb Morris
Gina Steves, AOA Director for Title 6 and Nutrition Director, Blue Lake Rancheria
Arlene Van Terrace, Torres-Martinez Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
Pat Roberts Menominee Indian Tribe
Angela Smart, Burns Paiute Tribe
Ray Capoeman, Quinault Indian Nation.
Sharon Thompson, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
Andrew Rave, Ho Chunk Nation
Krystalyn Kinsel, National Congress of American Indians

At this time, those are the introductions that we have at this time.

Okay, thank you, operator. If folks joined maybe a little bit late, we'd like to welcome you to today's consultation session. We do want to insure that everyone that's joining us had a chance to introduce themselves. If you did join late, you can press star one on your phone and the operator can assist us in insuring that you participate in introductions and we can gather your name and tribe for today's consultation record. So, operator, we'll go ahead and check to see if anyone joined a little late, and press star one for introductions please.

Thank you. One moment.

Attendees:

Charles "Red" Gates, designee for Tribal Chairman Charles W. Murphy, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Ruth Rifle, Commodity Food Distribution Program Director, Rosebud Sioux Tribe.
Stephanie Jackson, Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Denise Dodson, Ho-Chunk Nation
Connie Martinez, Food Distribution Program, Program Director, Pueblo of Acoma
Cecilia Gonzales-Lyons, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Nation
Darlene Sanchez, Greg Frazier and Cathy Switzer, Mountain Plains Regional Office, FNS USDA
Tod Robertson, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Yasena Pedenski, Grand Portage,
Deena Steves, Nutrition Director, Blue Lake Rancheria
Gordon Sam, Choctaw Food Distribution Program, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Amy Pratt, Comanche Nation of Oklahoma
Dorothy Boatwright, Chiquila Native Village
Georgia Barrows, Nez Perce Tribe
Kate Turner
Patty Hohola, Pueblo Isleta
Joyce Retherford, Confederated Tribes of Siletz
Peggy Bazant, Food Distribution Program, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
Dee Maddox, Southwest Regional Office, FNS USDA

And at this time there are no further introductions.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Great. Thank you, operator. And thank you, everyone, for your patience as we go through introductions again. This is going to be included as part of the official consultation record and we really appreciate everyone participating in introductions. And Tim, I'll hand it back to you.

Thanks, Barbara, I really appreciate it. And welcome again to everybody who's joined us today. As I said at the outset, the primary focus for the consultation today are several rule-making packages that we are moving forward with as a result of the enactment of the Healthy Hungry Kids Act back in 2010. That legislation that President Obama signed really made many, many changes to the school lunch program, the breakfast program, the summer program, and other programs that we administer here at the Food and Nutrition Service. Today we're going to go through eight different sets of regulations and give you a heads up on what's in those and what's coming and see if you have any thoughts or considerations we should have. I want to introduce Melissa Rothstein from my staff, who's going to go through each of these rules to give you a sense of what's in them, and then we'll stop after each one and see if anybody has any comments that they'd like to make.

So the first rule that we want to talk about today pertains to the school lunch program and the school breakfast program, and it's about the independent review of applications. And like I said, it was required by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. It's a proposed rule, and, Melissa, if you would like to go ahead and talk a little bit about what's in that.

Thanks, Tim.

The particular Section 304 of the Healthy Hungry Kids Act has a provision that requires that local education agencies that demonstrate high levels of or a high risk for administrative error associated with the free or reduced price application process, that those LEAs are required by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act to have a different individual, or a different independent entity, review the determinations they make of those free and reduced priced applications independently prior to letting the household know about the eligibility or ineligibility for free and reduced price meals. This provision was included in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act because of data that showed that there were a significant number of administrative errors made during the determination process for free and reduced price eligibility. And those errors were adding up to a significant portion of the improper payments that happen in the national school lunch and breakfast program.

The proposal that we have drafted will outline the procedures that state agencies would follow to select the local education agencies that would be subject to this independent review of application during the certification process. And the rule will also describe what those local educational agencies who are selected, what procedures they would have to use to conduct that second review of applications. The rule has been drafted and entered clearance here at the Food and Nutrition Service on the ninth of April. And it is a proposed rule, so it will be out for public comment once it finishes that clearance process.

Thanks, Melissa. Let's pause for a second. Does anybody have any questions or comments or thoughts about that particular regulation?

And, operator, we'll go ahead and open up for a consultation, please. Thank you.

At this time, if you would like to make a comment or have a question, please press star 1. One moment.

At this time there are no questions or comments.

Thank you very much.

Let's move on to the second regulation we were going to talk about today, again a school lunch program regulation, and it has to do with direct certification, continuous improvement plans. This rule is also a proposed rule, and Melissa, I'll turn it back over to you.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Thanks, Tim. This rule proposes to amend the school lunch program regulations to include provisions of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that are designed to encourage states to improve their direct certification efforts with a supplemental nutrition assistance program, or SNAP. When we talk about direct certification in this regulation, it means determining a child is eligible for free school meals based on documentation that's obtained directly from the SNAP agency, without, of course, requiring the household to apply for the free school meals. Usually this is accomplished by state and local educational agencies through an automated data matching process. The proposed rule that we published on January 31, 2012, included the provision from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that requires that states meet benchmarks each school year in the percentage of students who are on SNAP who are directly certified for free school meals. For school year 2011-2012, the school year we're finishing up right now, the threshold that they need to meet is 80% of SNAP school-age children need to be directly certified for free school meals. That percentage goes up next year to 90% of SNAP school-age children. And then starting school year 13-14 and each school year thereafter, 95% of all school-age children who are in SNAP need to be directly certified by the state. If a state doesn't meet the benchmark, the law and this proposed regulation require that the states develop and implement what we call continuous improvement plans to work toward improving their systems and meeting the required benchmarks in the following years.

As I mentioned, the rule was published, proposed, on January 21, 2012, and the comment period for this particular proposal ended on April 2, and we're in the process now of taking a look at the comments that we received through the comment process.

Thanks, again, Melissa. Any questions or comments from any of you?

Once again, if you do have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment.

At this time there are no questions or comments.

Thank you, operator.

The third rule we're going to talk about is perhaps one of the major rules that we're working on as a result of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. We refer to it as the competitive foods rule. It's exact title are Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold In Schools. Melissa, back to you.

Yeah, this proposal would amend the school lunch and school breakfast regulations to establish nutrition standards for those foods that are sold in schools other than foods sold or provided through the meals programs, like the national school lunch and breakfast program. We refer to these typically as competitive foods, or a la carte foods. Foods that are sold in vending machines also would be included in this category.

The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act has a number of provisions that we need to consider as we're developing the proposed rule, including considering the most recent dietary guidelines. Authoritative scientific recommendations for nutrition standards. An example of that would be recommendations from the Institute of Medicine.

We also need to consider existing school nutrition standards including any voluntary standards for beverages and snack foods. We're considering current state and local standards as well as the practical application of any nutrition standards that we propose.

And finally we need to create special exemptions for infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers.

This proposal also includes regulations for the new requirement from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that schools in the national school lunch program make potable water available to children free of charge in the place where they serve lunches during the meal service. The changes are intended to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation's children, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits for students in school.

And as I said this is a proposed rule. It has been drafted and is currently in clearance at the Office of Management and Budget. When it is published, there will be a public comment period, I believe, of 90 days.

Thanks. Just to give you a little bit more context, perhaps, with this rule, you may recall that we have published one of the core sets of rules as a result of the new legislation, and those are the rules that changed the standards that govern the quality of the meals that are provided to children who were receiving free and reduced price lunches, as well as those who are receiving full price lunches. What this rule does is sort of complement that and recognizes that there are other foods that are served in schools, and we didn't want to see, or Congress didn't want to see, those other foods undermine the nutritional quality of the school lunch. So here we have a set of rules that will be coming out that govern the quality of all of the other food that is provided in the schools.

With that, let me open it up, if you would, operator, and see if there are any comments or questions from folks.

Once again, if you do have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment.

Once again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star 1. One moment.

At this time there are no questions or comments.

Thank you, operator.

Okay, well let's turn away from the school lunch program for a minute or two. The next couple of regulations that we want to talk about are in one of our other programs that we administer. It's the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program. The first one of those are just – it's sort of a miscellaneous collection of amendments to that, and I'll ask Melissa to walk through those.

Yeah, this particular regulation is a proposed regulation that was published in the Federal Register on April 9, 2012. It is open for public comment now through June 8, 2012. And as Tim mentioned, this rule addresses several provisions related to the Child and Adult Care Food Program from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. Among those provisions, the proposed regulation would require institutions that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program to submit an initial application to the program for the program to the state agency, and then after that initial application, in subsequent years, they would only be required to periodically update the information on their application in lieu of submitting an entire new application each year.

The rule would also require sponsoring organizations to operate the program to vary the timing of the reviews that they conduct of their local daycare facilities that they sponsor. It would require state agencies to develop and provide for the use of a standard permanent agreement between daycare sponsors and the local daycare centers that they operate. It would allow family daycare homes that are classified as Tier Two daycare homes, which are those who are not in low income areas or not operated by a low income provider, it would allow those homes to collect household information about the families of the children in their care and transmit it to their sponsoring organization so that they could potentially receive higher reimbursements for the families of children who are low income who are in their care.

The rule also modifies the way that administrative payments are made to sponsors of daycare homes in the program. The administrative reimbursement would be based on a formula that is specified in the Act, and in addition, the rule and the law would allow the sponsors to carry over up to 10% of their

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

administrative funds from one fiscal year into the next to give some more flexibility in terms of planning purposes.

The rule also incorporates several changes to the application process and the renewal process, required disclosures of things like less-than-arm's-length transactions and other provisions that are required as part of the application process as the result of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.

Okay. Questions, comments from anyone on that? It's sort of in the weeds for everybody. It's kind of how that program is administered and stuff. I'm not sure if there's anything there that anybody has any comments on. Operator?

Once again, if you do have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment.

One moment, please, for your first question or comment.

Your question or comment comes from Gregory. Your line is open.

Thank you. Thank you for taking my question. I've found this very informative. What I really would just be curious in knowing in the proposed rule summary, the last paragraph indicating that there was 10% of their administrative funding from the previous fiscal year to the next. I guess just more clarification on the motive for making that proposed change.

Yeah, thank you for your question. That particular change is explicitly included in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act as a required provision of the program, and the idea is that it would give the local sponsoring organizations who operate the program on behalf of family daycare homes, it gives them more flexibility to plan, for instance, big purchases. If the timing of their purchases for allowable program costs could be better planned over the course of the fiscal year. For instance, if they wanted to purchase something in November, they could plan for it in the prior fiscal year knowing that they could carry over up to 10% of their funds to be able to make that allowable cost purchase. So it's to provide a little bit more flexibility in the use of those funds.

Has it been the agency's experience or history of knowing whether or not not having that provision is a detriment to programs?

I think that we don't have explicit data on it. I know that the family daycare home sponsoring community was a proponent of the change in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, so I feel that there is some feeling in that community that this will be very helpful to them in managing their administrative funds and making prudent purchases.

Thank you. That's all I have to inquire about.

Okay. Thank you.

Thanks, Gregory.

At this time there are no further questions or comments.

Okay. Staying with the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program, we have a regulation that is going to change the quality of the meals that are served to children in those settings. And Melissa, can you talk about that?

Sure. This is a proposed rule, another provision of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. For the first time requires that the Child and Adult Care Food Program meal patterns conform to the dietary guidelines. And similar to the school lunch program, the law requires that we propose a rule with changes to update

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

the meal patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program based on the latest dietary guidelines. The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act requires that we consider, of course, the dietary guidelines as well as any authoritative scientific recommendations such as those provided in November of 2010 by the Institute of Medicine. In developing the changes we also need to think about the practical applications of any revisions that we make to the meal patterns, and of course, the cost implications of the potential changes. So this rule, in addition to proposing changes to the Child and Adult Care Food Program meal patterns, it also incorporates the new requirement from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that any childcare institutions participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program provide safe drinking water to children throughout the day that they are in care.

And this rule is currently being drafted, and it will be a proposed rule with a comment period once it is released.

Comments, questions from anyone?

Once again, if you do have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment please.

At this time there are no questions or comments.

Thanks, operator.

Well, folks, believe it or not, we are making progress through our list. One of the areas that Congress was concerned about as they drafted and passed the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act was integrity in our programs as well, so the next regulation we're going to talk about are some of those integrity provisions that were contained in that statute, and, again, Melissa?

Sure. And this has a number of provisions, and most of them do come from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act although there are several recommendations that are included in this proposed rule based on our USDA Office of Inspector General recommendations regarding the Child and Adult Care Food Program. So I'll go through each of the particular provisions of the rule.

The first one would establish criteria for imposing fines against schools, school food authorities, sponsors, state agencies, and other providers that fail to correct severe violations of the Child Nutrition Program that they operate. The regulation also includes procedures for terminations and disqualifications in the Summer Food Service Program. And it includes a provision that prohibits participation of entities or individuals that have been terminated from any of the child nutrition programs to participate in another child nutrition program.

The rule modifies the state agency price review requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program to include additional criteria and priorities for use in choosing which institutions are being reviewed by the state. It also makes state agencies who operate the Child and Adult Care Food Program liable for the reimbursements that are made to sponsoring organizations if the state agency fails to conduct a timely hearing for the child and adult care institution during a serious deficiency process.

The rule allows for an increase in audit funding that is provided to state agencies. The level would be raised to up to two percent of the program funds that they receive when those funds are needed by the state agency to conduct oversight and increase integrity in the program.

There's also a provision that requires that the state agency for the Child and Adult Care Food Program conduct a verification of bank activity when they are doing a review of sponsoring organizations for that program to look at allowable costs for the program.

It also requires sponsors who operate daycare centers to report on their expenditures for the program on an annual basis to state agencies.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

And finally, the last provision of the rule is we establish serious deficiency and termination process for sponsored centers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. It's similar to what we have for family daycare homes in the program right now. We would extend that to local daycare centers. It's a serious deficiency and termination procedure.

And this rule is a proposed rule, as Tim mentioned, and it is being drafted, so when it is published there will be an opportunity for public comment.

Any questions or concerns that anyone has on that one. Operator?

Once again, if you have a question or concern, please press star 1. One moment.

One moment.

Your question comes from Gregory. Your line is open.

Thank you. I found this proposed rule change interesting to learn about. I guess I'm more curious in knowing how the agency is going to be cross referencing the – I guess the deterrence of what would be considered program violations, and how you – how do you determine – I guess I'm just curious, how do you determine that? From one program to the next?

In other words, how do we know whether somebody is screwing up, if you will, in one program, and how do we bring it over to see if they're still participating in the other program, Gregory?

Yeah, I believe so. I was looking through – I got my papers mixed up and I don't know if I'm looking at the right one.

No, I think that that sounds like the right one. The way that we address it right now, for instance, in the Child Adult Care Food Program, we have an existing, longstanding national disqualified list, and so if folks are terminated from the Child Adult Care Food Program and all their appeals have been heard and the termination is upheld, their name and the name of the organization goes on the national disqualified list. And there is a requirement for checking that list, state agencies need to check that list, prior to approving participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. And that's one way that we have right now where we make sure that folks who are not eligible to participate in the program aren't approved for the program. And that's just one example. That would be the kind of thing that we would look at to make sure that programs would share information and make it publicly available to those who need to know it.

Okay. Thank you.

Are there any other questions or comments?

At this time there are no further questions or comments.

Okay. The next regulation that Melissa is going to walk through is actually a – it's a direct final rule, which we don't see too much of, but there are some provisions in any statute that comes around where there really is no discretion on our part in terms of how we implement it, so there's no reason to take comment because Congress said you will do X, Y and Z, and there's really no discretion being exercised by the agency. So this regulation sort of grabs a few of those, and Melissa, why don't you talk about what's in there.

Sure. Yeah, there's multiple provisions in here. The first one I'll talk about is categorical eligibility for free meals for foster children whose care and placement is the responsibility of a state foster care agency or a court. And so that foster children are now automatically are categorically eligible for free meals in the child

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

nutrition program, and this rule adds that provision to the regulation for the various child nutrition programs.

The rule also eliminates an existing limitation on the number of sites that private nonprofit sponsors can be approved to operate for the summer food service program. That limit is now removed as the result of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.

It also requires cooperation between state agencies that administer the national school lunch program to insure that school food authorities who have agreements with the national school lunch program, a state agency, that they cooperate in helping to publicize the summer food service program by distributing materials to inform families of the availability of those summer meals as well as to make sure families know about the availability of free breakfasts, to the extent that breakfasts are offered.

The rule also expands the allowable sources of income information that can be used for determining eligibility for daycare homes in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. More sources – elementary school free and reduced price data can be used. High school, elementary and middle school information can now be used for making those determinations. Before it was only elementary school data.

There were also some changes by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that are included in this rule that require that only the last four digits of an adult's Social Security number be provided when they sign the free and reduced price application. In lieu of the complete Social Security number, they only need to provide the last four digits of the Social Security number.

There is also a provision on school food safety programs that requires that in establishing a school food safety program, in a school, that any part of a facility where foods are stored, prepared or served throughout the school campus would be included and under that school food safety program and under the requirements of the school food safety program.

There is also a streamlining provision which requires state agencies and institutions and sponsors of the child nutrition program to enter into permanent agreements instead of requiring annual agreements for these programs.

As Tim mentioned, these are all nondiscretionary provisions, and because of that we issued a series of implementation memoranda after the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act was passed so that program operators could make these changes immediately. And this final rule catches up the regulations to all of these required elements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. The final rule is in clearance, and we would expect that it will be published pretty soon.

Operator, can we open for questions and comments?

Thank you. Once again, if you do have a question or comment, please press star 1.

One moment please.

Your question or comment comes from Joyce Rutherford. Your line is open.

Hi. I was just wondering if the free meals for foster children, I believe I remember hearing, isn't that already a rule for FDPIR? That foster children can receive FDPIR as their own household?

Laura Castro and Dana Arasmuson (sp) are here, and –

I believe that foster children may be considered a household of one for determining eligibility for FDPIR.

Okay. Thank you.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Thanks, Dana.

Your next question or comment comes from Krystalyn, I believe NCAI. Your line is open.

Hi. This is Krystalyn Kinsel with the National Congress of American Indians. This isn't a question, but it's more of a comment, and I know we can't make any changes to the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act at this point, but I just want to make sure that the Department is aware that although foster children can participate in the national school lunch program, but it's only as long as they are placed with an agency that administers a state plan under the Child and Family Services or the Federal Payments for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Program of the Social Security Act, and unfortunately not all tribes operate child and family services programs and none of them operate Federal Payments for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance as authorized under the Social Security Act. So therefore not all American Indian, Alaska Native children have been placed in foster care are automatically eligible for the national school lunch program and the resources it provides. So I just wanted to make sure that, you know, you are aware of that and it's something that will be considered in the future.

Thanks, Krystalyn. Are you asking if it's something that will be considered in the future or are you saying that you think it will be by Congress?

No, I'm just saying I just want to make sure your agency and your people are aware of this issue and that it is considered in the future.

Yes. And thank you for pointing that out. We are aware of it and we'll be looking at future legislation for that. I'd also add that what this provision does is make the eligibility of the foster child automatic. It doesn't mean that they would not be eligible through the other means and stuff like that. So while the advantage of the automatic eligibility that the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act provides to some of these children is not they're – it doesn't mean that children are not eligible. Some, and many, may still be eligible. But thank you for your point. And we'll make sure that we have that on our list as we're looking at legislation down the road here, okay?

Okay, great. Thank you.

Thank you. Anyone else?

At this time there are no further questions or comments.

Okay. Thanks. So our last regulation turns to another one of the programs that we administer and that's the Summer Food Service Program. Again, this one is focused mostly on the administrative side of that program, and, Melissa, can you bring folks up to date on where we are with that.

This is a provision that was actually, we call it the simplified summer program, and it's a provision that came into being through the 2008 Appropriations Act. Prior to this provision, sponsors in the Summer Food Service Program were required to do a cost comparison between their actual costs and the reimbursement rate, and they would earn whichever was less in order to get their reimbursement in the program. And the 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act actually eliminated that cost comparison, which, for purposes of the program, means that the reimbursement rate provided for each meal is what every sponsor in the program gets. There is no longer a cost comparison. So this proposed rule puts the provisions into the regulations to eliminate the cost comparison requirement for determining the reimbursement payments that sponsors receive.

We also included in the rule a number of additional implications to improve the efficiency of the Summer Food Service Program and to reduce paperwork.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Of course the purpose of the simplified procedures would be to encourage more organizations to provide meals to children in the summertime and to increase the number of children who receive these meals by providing sponsors with easier administration of the program. The provisions are in effect since Congress passed them in 2008, and this proposed rule would codify what program operations are as well as make a few other additional paperwork reduction proposals that I mentioned. And the rule is proposed. It is currently in clearance, and when it is issued there will be a comment period for the public.

Thanks, Melissa. I hope that everybody is familiar with the Summer Food Service Program. It's a program that we administer here, obviously, and it really plugs a gap where, you know, there are 20 million children getting free and reduced price lunches during the school year, and then summer comes and suddenly they have those meals not available to them. Well, the summer program is there to try to plug that gap, as I said, and unfortunately, of the 20 million children, only about eight million are getting meals in the summer. So, hopefully, if you don't have a summer program in your community, you can try to explore that and see if there are organizations or whatever that might be able to do that.

Are there any questions for Melissa on the regulation that she described? Operator?

Once again, if you have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment.

At this time there are no questions or comments.

Thank you very much, operator. I'm going to switch the agenda around a little bit and ask Laura Castro at this point if she would provide everybody with a few items of updates and stuff for our folks. Laura?

Thank you, Tim. Let me start off first with an update on what we're doing with the FDPIR food package. As many of you know, FNS is continuously reviewing the FDPIR food package with the help of our FDPIR food package work group, which is comprised of FDPIR program representatives and FNS staff. The work group has identified a number of items they would like to include in the FDPIR package, and FNS is incorporating those items into the food package as we can. We recently added a fully-cooked turkey roast and are expecting a dried fruit and nut mix for delivery to warehouses very soon. We are also looking at reintroducing butter into the food package in limited quantities. As many of you know, butter was removed from the FDPIR food package in 2007 to support the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendations to reduce saturated fat intake. Since that time, many in the FDPIR community have asked that butter be in the FDPIR food package again, and FNS has been working with the Food Package Review work group to identify options for reintroducing butter that will reflect tribal preferences as well as maintain healthy options for FDPIR program participants.

On May the first, FNS issued new distribution rates for the FDPIR food package that are designed to give participants more choices in the foods they receive. For example, pasta and rice products were placed in one category so participants can better meet their preferences for the type of product they desire. In addition, participants can now select from a wide variety of fresh, canned and dried fruit products in the single category, and the same is true for fresh and canned vegetables.

We are continuing to work through our Food Package Review work group to identify additional products or changes in distribution rates that will help assure the FDPIR food package is nutritious and appealing to participants.

I also want to talk about the FDPIR Regional Vendor Pilot and give you an update on that issue. As we have discussed in prior consultations, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service has been considering a pilot of a regional vendor distribution model in FDPIR. And under the current national warehouse model, we buy food for the FDPIR food package. The distribution of the food to participating Indian tribal organizations and state agencies administering FDPIR is performed by two USDA-contracted warehouses. Under the pilot we're looking at, the USDA would contract with a regional vendor to supply food to some FDPIR programs, and that vendor would buy FDPIR approved foods and distribute them

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

directly to the Indian tribal organizations and state agencies administering the program. We anticipate that this model would potentially allow for greater opportunity to buy traditional and/or local foods from Native American producers and reduce overall storage and transportation costs, and we have envisioned that the pilot would be available in a limited geographic area or areas and that a limited number of programs would participate. The remaining FDPIR programs would continue to be served by the national warehouse model while the pilot is underway. Last year we asked tribes which operate FDPIR if they were interested in participating in the pilot, and about 30 tribes expressed interest in doing so. So on April fifth we released a request for proposal to invite potential vendors to bid on the pilot, and that request is open until May the twenty-first. Once that date passes, we will be evaluating the offers and hope to award the pilot contracts this summer.

And lastly I'd just like to update you on an issue that I know has been of interest to the FDPIR community and that is the Life Line Program. This is the Federal Communications Commission program which is set up to provide discounts on basic monthly telephone service, either wire line or wireless, to qualifying low income households. And we're pleased to report that the Federal Communications Commission recently added recipients of FDPIR to the list of those who qualify to participate in the Life Line Program. To qualify for Life Line through FDPIR, consumers must provide proof of receipt of FDPIR, and that proof can be either documentation reviewed by the carrier or other authorized entity, and that documentation would include things like a notice letter of participation in FDPIR, FDPIR participation documents such as a benefit card or copy of the benefit card, or another official document evidencing the consumer's participation in FDPIR. We're very pleased that the Federal Communications Commission has taken this important step in expanding access to telecommunications services, and we will continue to work with them to make sure carriers and FDPIR recipients are aware of this valuable benefit. We have posted some information about the benefit on our Tribal Affairs website at www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal.

So with that I'm finished with FDPIR updates.

Thanks, Laura. Does anybody have any comments, questions for Laura on any of the updates?
Operator?

Once again, if you do have a question or a comment, please press star 1. One moment.

One moment, please. The first question or comment comes from Joyce Rutherford. Your line is open.

Hi. I just wanted to say I liked the proposal to add potable water to the child nutrition program, and I'm hoping we can carry that over to our FDPIR clients also. Our people have been asking for bottled water for some time. And also, just another comment. I've been reading through the proposed policy changes in the Federal Register, and over and over again I see it mentioned that participants have to live in a certain area or within the reservation boundaries, and I think that at the national conference in June we're going to have to look at some way to do away with the rural and urban designations. And if the person's got a tribal ID, they should be able to make the choice about whether they want to participate in SNAP or FDPIR. I had a lady call me the other day. She was surrounded by three different tribal programs, but was just outside of all of them. She had a household of five and she was getting \$147.00 a month for food stamps. So she couldn't get on FDPIR because she was just outside of those three reservation boundaries. So I think it's time that we look at something like that at our national conference. So that's all the comment I have.

Thanks, Joyce. I look forward to talking with you and your colleagues when we get to the conference in June. I think that would be a timely topic.

Yes.

Anybody else?

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Your next question or comment comes from Tony, I believe, Nertoli. Your line is open.

Good afternoon, Laura.

Hi, Tony.

My question concerns the new regulations on cost of living for 350 or 400. The comments were due April tenth?

Yes.

Okay. When will those new regulations go into effect? They're going to have a major effect on the programs.

We are anxious to see them go into effect, Tony. Just like with any proposed rule process, it does take some time to go through all the official steps, so obviously the comment period has closed. We have received all the comments. We appreciate the number that we received, and many of them were very favorable to the proposed rule so that should help us move forward with it quickly. At this point I can't give you an exact date. We are, obviously, going to try to move it as quickly as possible. We're probably talking some months to get the final rule into place, and we certainly will keep you posted. It's something that is a high priority for us, and we will keep pushing here to make sure we get it into place as soon as possible.

Okay. Follow up question, Laura. The national warehouse's contract is up in June thirtieth.

Yes.

According to different stuff I've read on the internet, are these guys going to be renewed, or how are we going to do that?

Yes, what we are doing right now, and actually just within the last few days we have worked to get an extension on that contract while we are working to award the new contract; so I, again, cannot tell you exactly when we will have a new contract awarded. It should be fairly soon. But what we have done in the meantime to make sure there is no disruption of service and that we have transition time should we need it to renew vendors, we have gone ahead and extended that contract.

Okay, that's it. Thank you very much.

Your next question or comment comes from Georgia Barrows. Your line is open.

Hi. I had a few questions. One is what is the type of vendor pilot that has applied or showed interest?

Yes, hi, Georgia, this is Laura.

Hi, Laura.

At this point we're still waiting for applications to come in, and because it's a procurement issue, we are not at liberty to talk about any of the proposals that are coming in until after the award is made.

Oh, okay.

I can't give you any specifics on that right now. You can certainly look at the request for proposal to get an idea of the things that we're looking for.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Oh, okay.

I can't personally tell you anything about the offers that we're receiving.

And how many vendor pilots are you going to have?

We are anticipating that we're going to have to limit it to one of the geographic areas that we outlined in the request for proposal. Depending on which geographic area it is, the number of tribes involved would vary. But it will be a relatively small segment –

Okay.

Of the country so that we can try it out and make sure we have sufficient funds to do it.

Okay. And my other comment was, you know, about the national warehouse, too, you know. We are, or, you know, we like working with the – I forgot their names now. The one that's been – oh, gosh, I can't even remember them.

Paris Brothers or –

Yes, Paris Brothers. I don't know why I forgot them. They seem to be working out with us, or I feel that way, and they've come to our regional conferences to be there to answer questions or to show face, but we would like to be able to keep them, and if we don't, I'm not sure where we'd be going next until you guys select the warehouse, right?

Right.

Okay. And the other thing, working with different projects, they show the food cost package, but reading through, it doesn't, you know, state like how much the actual food cost is, you know, of procuring and then putting it together, and then the transportation, and so I wasn't quite sure how they based the food cost package at the number that they have. And it's not, you know, like going through SNAP, they have a lot of breakdowns of how much and everything they had plus data to show the statistics of how many people that are on SNAP and how many, you know, the increase in the different areas. And also the locations on the populations, you know, what the poverty level and everything is, and it just seems like the food distribution program doesn't have anything like that. I've been searching for that to find out, because that would be good for each program to have to share with their tribe, you know, show the benefits and then also to help provide where we could see where there's areas that maybe we can consider and to select us another service area. But, you know, we are working on that right now, you know, about finding if there is any other locations that we can include in our service area but if it was able to be, you know, just more tracking that would be available to FDPIR.

Yes - Georgia, you're talking about looking at data on SNAP participation near you, is that what you're –

Yeah.

Yeah. And actually, you know, it's about the food cost package because, you know, how do you – how would you relate the program, you know, we are, you know, this is how much –

Yes.

This is how much a food cost package costs, but then it states that, you know, reading through that, you know, it does not include – and that's why I mentioned about the how they're getting there, where the food came from, etc.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Yes.

And so, what are they basing the food costs at?

Do you mean in terms of how do they set the SNAP benefit or are you looking for the value of the FDPIR food package?

Well, the value of the FDPIR package. It was just that reading through SNAP, I didn't mean to make it confusing, but they have it all available. I mean, they show that plus the statistics and everything on –

Yeah.

On the poverty areas and everything. But nationally, it's not shown, you know, for the FDPIR, you know, to show where we're at.

Yes. We do have something up on our website, and I can point that to you after the call is out, but it's on our research page. We did recently estimate the retail value of the FDPIR food package.

Um hmm.

So that would be if you went to the store and bought all the items in the FDPIR food package, about how much would that cost you. So that is, from a participant's standpoint, certainly one of the benefits of FDPIR is being able to, you know, having to avoid spending those extra dollars on food at a retail store, we estimate that it's about \$78.00 per person.

Okay. Okay, yeah. I did find that part, so. And on the FDPIR website, did they make changes then to that? Updated it? The format?

We haven't made any major changes in a little while. It's probably been about a year or so since we've made any

Okay.

Major changes in that format. You know, we're constantly trying to look at what needs to come up and down. This research that tells the FDPIR food package retail value is -. I know for certain on FNS research page, so – and we can get to the links.

Okay. All right. And lastly, you know, course rules, pushing for the traditional foods or even just the main, you know, like the salmon, the bison. And I know they talked about the wild rice or brown rice or, you know, hopefully, at least something like those items would be available, so. If you're not able to get anything else. I would like to recommend that. Okay, that is all I have. Thank you, Laura.

You're welcome.

Thank you.

Your next question or comment comes from Gregory Nothstine.

Thanks for taking my call. Speaking of food, it's 12:30 in Alaska time. I'm getting hungry and I'd like to move on, but I had a couple comments. I'm following up on a comment made about the national warehouse contract. It would be nice, and I think we discussed this before, if it was possible, I think one warehouse indicated that they could do it or were already doing it, and that was listing the "best if used by date" in the bill of lading, or they have the potential to do that, and I was just curious if USDA was going to

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

implement a strategy for suggesting or recommending that in the upcoming renewal of the contracts to see if that was going to be possible. So that was my first comment or question.

Hi, Greg. We have in our proposal for the new contract asked that the vendor be able to routinely monitor and report back to us on best if used by dates for the most perishable products. So that is something that we're expecting to get a better handle on with the new contract.

Okay. A follow up comment or question on that is – is there an existing USDA policy regarding how close to the best if used by date is acceptable for sending it out to tribal agencies?

Yeah, Greg, I think the policy is that we want the foods to be distributed within sufficient time for a participant to use it before the best if used by date, if there is a use by date posted on the product. And that time period is?

Well, generally, your food package is supposed to last you a month, so –

Yeah.

A month out?

That would be our expectation is that, yeah, you shouldn't –

Okay. I was just curious, and just wanted to make sure I understand it properly and I got a clarification on that.

Right.

I enjoyed the comment that Tony made, or at least wanted to follow up on the proposed rule changes. I know that one of the challenges of FDPIR in its recent decline as not being able to afford or provide the same detailed level of deductions for households who might be determined eligible if they were given those deduction eligibility standards similar to SNAP. So, definitely want to see, or at least encourage, the probability of seeing these implemented in FY13 if at all possible. You're definitely going to see an increase in FDPIR participation as a result, at least in our state here in Alaska because they fall just above the eligibility limit, and if they had those deductions for shelter and utilities, it would make those households of five and six with children eligible to receive benefits. So, hoping that that is good news. Something down the pike when – just before FY13 rolls around.

What else was there? I guess following up on Georgia's comment, which was – and I enjoyed listening to that, and I just found it on the – I just Googled the report you indicated with regard to an itemized breakdown on the value of the FDPIR food package and how that's broken down and determined. But having that available, or something, I guess, in a more visible fashion. Most of this is just – I guess I'm more visual. I mean this is – this is written nicely enough. I'd just be curious of there's a graph breakdown on how these foods are itemized and how we can determine how the food packages actually itemize out to come up with that figure.

Ys, I don't think that is in the published report, you're right. But, you know, that's something we can look at doing. We do plan to update that report on a periodic basis, so that's something we can look at when we do that.

Okay. I just wanted, again, to thank you for all that you're doing. I know that you're all having to also abide by many policies and regulations, and then be the facilitators of sending that information out to us and appreciate the work that you are doing.

Thank you, Greg.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Your next question or comment comes from Roxanna Newsome.

Hi, Laura. I just wanted to say that I definitely appreciate the FCC and FNS going to bat for us to be included in Life Line. I understand from our meeting that we recently had in Dallas that this was approved for FDPIR February twenty-ninth of this year. I guess my concern is that I understood that we were not able to promote this until the website was updated. And we're still not – FDPIR is still not one of the approved programs on the website.

Right.

At this time.

Roxanna, this is Tim. You're right and we're kind of disappointed in that. We have someone here who I think on a weekly basis now, if not more often, is trying to push that listing on the website at the FCC. We'll be doing whatever we can to do that. We actually had hoped that we'd be telling you that it went up this week, but obviously, it didn't happen yet. So we are continuing to push. And I hoped that we could have gotten this done a long time ago, frankly, but we're doing whatever we can at this point.

Okay. I appreciate it.

Your next question or comment comes from Krystalyn Kinsel from NCAI.

Hi. I just want – I have to jump off soon, but I'm sorry to change the discussion, but I was hoping to ask, I believe Melissa, a question, or several questions, about the first agenda item, the rule on independent review of applications required by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act?

Sure.

So my questions are, who qualifies as an individual or entity to independently review the independent eligibility determination? Who is responsible for funding it? And will technical assistance be provided to assist these LEAs in the future?

Yes. In terms of who would be qualified to do the independent review, or the second review of the applications, to be independent, of course, it would need to be an individual who was not involved in the first round of the review. And it would need to be someone who is trained in actually conducting the reviews and being able to take a look at the application and make a proper determination based on the rules.

In terms of funding it, it is an allowable expense for the Social Service account. And so the local school district could use its, and would likely use its nonprofit school food service account which includes the federal reimbursement provided by the USDA as well as other funds, both from the local communities, in many cases, as well as student payments. And so that would be the way that it would be funded.

And then, what was your third question?

And would technical assistance be provided to assist these LEAs in the future?

Yes, certainly. Part of what we're getting at, and part of this requirement, is to make sure that the simple mistakes that occur on looking at the application are taken care of before the children are provided the free or reduced price meals, possibly in error. And so the timeframe that school food authorities have to conduct this will be very short because we don't want to delay the benefits. But this is a process that school food authorities are used to, but as it's rolled out and LEAs are identified as having to do this requirement, states will be required to provide any technical assistance as needed.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Okay, thank you.

Your last question or comment, the name did not record. If you have not yet asked your question, your line is open. Please check your mute button. Once again, if you have not asked your question but did depress star one, your line is open. Please check your mute button.

This is Cecilia Gonzales-Lyons.

Hi, Cecilia.

Hi. Tony had asked the question I wanted and so did Georgia Burrows. But I just want to piggyback to make emphasis on what Georgia had stated about the pastas and the rice that are coming in with the new food packages. I would really like to see wheat pastas put into that and brown rice. I'm just voicing a strong voice on that. And that's all.

Thank you, Cecilia. That's very helpful.

Thank you.

At this time there are no further questions or comments.

Thank you. Last thing that I wanted to do today was to just sort of open the lines up for any comments or questions or ideas, thoughts that anybody has on any of the stuff that we've got. We've covered a lot of ground already, but there's probably other issues that many of you may have. So, operator, if we could just open the lines for folks who may have anything else to bring up.

Yes, sir. At this time if you do have a question, comment, please press star 1. One moment.

One moment please. Pat Roberts, your line is open.

Hello, everyone. And I guess I just want to say thank you, too, for all that you do. But I think there is a little bit more that probably can be done to help the FDPIR, and that would be I know USDA does a lot of outreach for the SNAP program, but I never see anything for FDPIR. And just maybe we'd like to see a little bit of outreach that USDA does for FDPIR. You refer people to SNAP, but nothing is ever referred to FDPIR. I'd just like to more of that. Or some of it.

Thanks for that comment, Pat. I appreciate that. We will definitely talk about that. Thank you.

Yes. Thank you.

The next question or comment comes from Denise Dodson. Your line is open.

Likewise I want to express my gratitude to everybody involved. I consider myself still relatively new to this, so please forgive me. I did want to ask a question or express a comment. I heard something about a request for bottled water. And I'm not sure if there are specific issues in some areas where access to water is an issue, but my only reservation with providing bottled water is that I, from a personal standpoint, don't view that as being practical or sustainable or a good use of the resource. And for a lot of areas access to tap water or well water is, in my opinion, a preferred choice. I just wanted to touch on that.

Thanks, Denise. I'm not sure – I'm looking at Dana and Laura – if the bottled water issue has come up as part of the Food Package work group, but that would probably be where it could be discussed and stuff. And like you said, you know, there's a lot of different situations represented by the ITOs that are

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

participating and stuff, so there could be different situations like I said. So we'll take a look at it through that venue. And I appreciate your comment.

Thank you.

Your next question or comment comes from Gregory. Your line is open.

Thank you for taking my call. The last caller indicated it would be nice to see the USDA do some outreach on FDPIR or if there was any history on the USDA doing that besides doing it with, I guess, directly to tribal ITOs, or, I guess, ITOs in general. Has there been any direct public outreach with regard to announcing the availability of FDPIR to the general public? My question.

Gregory, this is Tim. I'm not sure that I've ever seen that. I've been, you know, you may know I've been here for quite a while, mostly with food stamps, now SNAP. Typically outreach is done by the state agencies. We support it. We've done material for them. I'm talking about food stamps and SNAP now. And it's not that we hadn't done anything nationally from here, we certainly have, but the primary outreach efforts have usually been undertaken by states and everything. I don't know historically if we've done anything with FDPIR in regard to outreach, so – and that's why, one of the reasons why, the comment was intriguing to me, because, you know, I think it sort of triggered something in my mind that – I think, if it's going to be successful, we don't do it alone from here. And that's simply true with SNAP as well. It's something that we would be doing in conjunction with those entities that are running FDPIR, so I think that that's something for us all to explore as a community.

Okay. Another question or at least a comment. In the beginning when we were introducing this wonderful program to the tribal agencies throughout Alaska, there was a question that came up that asked us, do you have an image of the volume of food that you can share with the potential clients? And I looked on the USDA's website, and I didn't see any. And I inquired about whether or not there was such a – any such images available, for a household of one, how much food can you receive, and then with a household of two, and so on. I ended up having to pull inventory on my own and actually come up with images, or at least an example of the volume of food available for households for one to three anyway. I'd just be curious if that might be something possible that the USDA could help with regard to providing those types of images to providing outreach because some people really don't understand how much volume of food they can receive through this program.

That's a good point. And, you know, I think if we go down the path of exploring outreach kind of efforts and stuff, that's the kind of interaction, I think, that we could all benefit from. I'm tempted to say can you share your pictures with us so that we might be able to share them with other folks? As you were talking I was looking at Laura and Dana, and they were saying that they're not aware that we've got those images, so you may be the first in the area, Greg.

Okay. Well, I'll be happy to. I know that we made posters for our local agencies to post up at the clinics and at the post office so that they just have a contact number that they may be eligible for healthy food benefits.

Wow. That sounds great. Yeah. If you could share that with us, then we can talk to other folks and stuff and see what takes off from there.

Well, I actually received that from attending the San Antonio workshop. I can't remember who gave the workshop, but they provided us with some wonderful information and I was able to utilize it.

Great.

Without the images. Without the images, however. Okay, yeah, I'll share that with you. Thank you.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

Okay.

One moment, please, for your next question or comment.

Rake Pullman. Your line is open. You may ask your question or state your comment.

Yes, sir. Your line is open.

Okay. Thank you. I'm just kind of curious and wondering, with all the new changes to the food package, your saying a household of one is \$78.00. With all the changes to the food package now, does that average still come out to the same?

Yeah, that's something that we'll find out. That \$78.00 was 2009, I believe, items in the food package, so it's even a little bit dated. And, obviously, retail values can vary across the country, but that's a national average for the items that were in the package in 2009. So, yeah, we will be looking to update that food retail value.

I really thank the USDA and the Food Package Review Committee for all the work they've done on it because I've been on it in the past myself, but I can say I totally don't agree, and I'm sure some of the clients don't agree, with some of the changes that are there, you know, after all these years on here and looking at changes today, they just don't make sense to me. But, you know, I'll wait until I get to Niagara to voice my opinion on that. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. The next question comes from Ms. Mattson, your line is open.

Yes, I just wanted to ask regarding the outreach and the wonderful suggestion of pictorial depictions of what, say, one person would be eligible for. Would we also be able to get a pictorial depiction of what that same individual using the SNAP program would be eligible for, because I think those two comparisons would be very powerful as well.

I'm not familiar with whether there is any kind of a graphic that shows what a typical SNAP recipient would be purchasing. I'm sitting here trying to think through some of the outreach stuff that I've seen over the years, and that's not one that's coming to mind, but we can see if there is something here. But, you know, we can take a look, okay?

Sure. It may be, in some respects, comparing apples to oranges, but -.

But, you know, at this point, if folks are going to be thinking about outreach and stuff, I think it's, you know, maybe not on this call or whatever, but I think we need to be in a position where we can sort of Blue Sky some ideas, so to speak, and see where we go. You know, I get that this may not be the exact venue for it, but, you know, maybe there'll be some discussions when we get to Niagara or whatever.

Sure. Thank you.

Thank you. The next question comes from Georgia Barrows.

Hello, in regards to what has been mentioned, you know, about the outreach. You know, they used to have that FDPIR poster, too. I think it's still on the website where you can pull it and add your own family or pictures or anything to that, you know, to set out, or as an outreach effort. And like brochures and things, I think that would be great. Also, I think we talked about it once or twice during Western Region meetings that it has an FDPIR toolkit, and I know something like that can be done, and so it would be something that we could have online, you know, where people can call into it, or go into the website and

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Tribal Consultation Quarterly Session
May 2, 2012

pull it up, and it would give info about the FDPIR also how to apply or where to apply. And there, you know, it could show a display of foods that you would be eligible for and, you know, for a household of one, you know, this is how much you would get and things like that. But I think that would be great. And then would emphasize, you know, about no dual participation and all, so that's something that we could get going. I know we've – with the Idaho Hunger Council that I've been part of, we did work with a SNAP toolkit. So it's something that's, you know, possible, and I'm not sure how much it would cost to get it done or anything, but I think that would be something to look at. You know, it has something for each programmer or ITOs to have available and then to be online. That would be my suggestion. And I do thank everyone, too, for allowing to have this type of conference call.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Our next question comes from Gregory.

I just want to echo Georgia's comment. I'm looking at – if you Google – well, if you Google, SNAP toolkits or food stamp toolkits, you'll get a bunch, but you won't get any for FDPIR. That's all.

I want to say thanks, but I'm not sure that was good news, Greg.

Thank you. At this time I'm showing no further questions.

Thank you, everyone. We spent quite a bit of time today, and it's been great. Thank you for all your ideas and your participation. You know, I think that each time we do these consultations via conference calls, it gets a little bit better. I think we're all getting a little bit used to the technology. It can be a little bit awkward. But I'm pleased that folks are jumping in with their comments and their concerns and stuff.

As I said at the outset, it's really important to us here at FNS to get your input on the things that we're doing. I know that some of the rules that Melissa went through, you're probably scratching your heads and wondering well how does this affect me. It may not affect you all directly. It may affect a couple of you, but if nothing else, I hope you get a good sense of the kinds of things that we're doing in our programs. And it's those programs that really do affect the members of your communities. And so I appreciate you joining us today and in the past, and hope that you'll join us in the future, and I really appreciate your participation. It's terribly difficult to do this kind of thing and not get any input, and so I really appreciate all of you for being active participants and active listeners today.

The next consultation session that we are planning to do is going to be August 29 from 3:00 to 4:30 Eastern time, so hopefully you'll all be able to join us at that point. And with that I'm going to just sign off and say thank you once again. Look forward to continuing the dialogue that we have ongoing, and hope to see you, some of you, in Niagara Falls and talk to the rest of you down the road. So thank you all very much for joining us today. I really appreciate it.

This concludes the conference call. All parties may disconnect at this time.